
HOUSE RESOLUTION

STRONGLY URGING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FEDERAL AID AND SUPPORT TO THE STATE OF HAWAII FOR FINANCIAL, MEDICAL, AND OTHER FEDERAL ASSISTANCE FOR MIGRANTS COVERED BY THE COMPACT OF FREE ASSOCIATION.

1 WHEREAS, the United States entered into a Compact of Free
2 Association (COFA) with the Federated States of Micronesia, the
3 Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau in
4 1983, which granted citizens of these nations the ability to
5 freely enter the United States and have access to domestic
6 social welfare programs; and
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8 WHEREAS, under this Compact, COFA migrants are allowed to
9 freely enter the State of Hawaii and are granted access to
10 certain state services, such as education and health care; and
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12 WHEREAS, the United States Congress passed the Personal
13 Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act of 1996
14 (PRWORA), that makes needy persons from COFA nations ineligible
15 from receiving federally funded financial and medical
16 assistance; and
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18 WHEREAS, when the PRWORA went into effect in 1997, Hawaii
19 continued to provide equivalent services for COFA migrants using
20 State funds; and
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22 WHEREAS, the cost to the State to provide various services
23 to COFA migrants continues to increase every year and strains
24 the State's resources; and
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26 WHEREAS, in 2014, it was estimated that the State spent
27 \$163 million on COFA migrants, and of that amount, 53 percent
28 was spent on education and 44 percent was spent on health and
29 social services; and



1 WHEREAS, in 2017, Hawaii spent between \$30 and \$40 million
2 on healthcare costs alone, more than twice the approximately \$12
3 million the State receives in federal Compact Impact Assistance
4 funding; and

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6 WHEREAS, if the PRWORA is amended to allow COFA migrants to
7 receive federally funded financial and medical assistance, the
8 State would not have to expend state funds to provide the
9 equivalent services, thus allowing more of the State's general
10 funds to be used for services and programs for which federal
11 funding is not available; and

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13 WHEREAS, in addition to amending the PRWORA, the State
14 would likely see a decrease in cost if the United States
15 government provided much needed dialysis and chemotherapy
16 centers in Micronesia and all areas covered by the Compact; and

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18 WHEREAS, the United States government must address the
19 issue of additional federal support for the State to continue
20 providing state services to COFA migrants arising from the
21 unique federally created relationship between the United States
22 and the COFA nations; now, therefore,

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24 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
25 Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of
26 2019, that the United States Department of the Interior and the
27 Congress of the United States are strongly urged to provide
28 additional federal aid and support to the State of Hawaii for
29 financial, medical, and other federal assistance for the
30 migrants covered by the Compact of Free Association; and

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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Department of
33 the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs, is strongly urged to
34 review the funding of the Compact Impact Assistance grant and to
35 make every effort to increase the amount of direct assistance
36 available to Hawaii to offset costs incurred by the State; and

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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Congress is
39 strongly urged to support federal legislation to amend the
40 PRWORA to render COFA migrants eligible to receive federally
41 funded financial and medical assistance; and



1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Department of
 2 the Interior is strongly urged to identify and secure other
 3 forms of direct assistance to the State and COFA population in
 4 the United States, including grants from other sources and
 5 federal programs; and

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 7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Department of
 8 the Interior is strongly urged to provide dialysis and
 9 chemotherapy centers in Micronesia and in all areas within the
 10 Compact to decrease health care costs in the State; and

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 12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 13 Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States,
 14 the United States Secretary of the Interior, the Director of the
 15 Office of Insular Affairs, the Majority Leader of the United
 16 States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of
 17 Representatives, and the members of Hawaii's congressional
 18 delegation.

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OFFERED BY:

Nella A. Sisti
Lyn DeCosta
T. Staler

John M. ...
Jan ...
...
Tom ...
Richard ...
Rory M. ...
Christy ...

